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Neglected Arabia

"ARABIA THE LOVED."

I

There's a land since long neglected,
There's a people still rejected,
But of truth and grace elected,
In His love for them.

II.

Softer than their night wind's fleeting,
Richer than their starry tenting,
Stronger than their sands protecting,
Is His love for them.

III.

To the host of Islam's leading,
To the slave in bondage bleeding,
To the desert dweller pleading,
Bring His love to them.

IV.

Through the promise on God's pages,
Through His work in history's stages,
Through the cross that crowns the ages,
Show His love to them.

V.

With the prayer that still availeth,
With the power that prevailleth,
With the love that never faileth,
Tell His love to them.

VI.

Till the desert's sons now aliens,
Till its tribes and their dominions,
Till Arabia's raptured millions,
Praise His love of them.

J. G. Lansing.

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Neglected

Missionary
News and Letters

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The Arabian Mission

Arabia



BUSRAH DISPENSARY.

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The Arabian Mission.

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NEGLECTED ARABIA.

April - June, 1909.

Letting in the Light.

MR. DIRK DYKSTRA.

Some time ago it was my privilege to be invited by the British Political Agent in Bahrein to be present at the opening of one of the mounds famous since the visit of Theodore Bent. At four o'clock in the afternoon we mounted our donkeys and for two hours rode in and out among date gardens and patches of alfalfa. The sun was nearly setting when we emerged from a garden of palms and came upon an open plain dotted with a hundred thousand mounds. Near the garden are a dozen of the largest, most of which have been opened; while farther away, as far as the eye can see, are countless numbers of smaller mounds, many of which have been opened, with more satisfactory results than the larger.

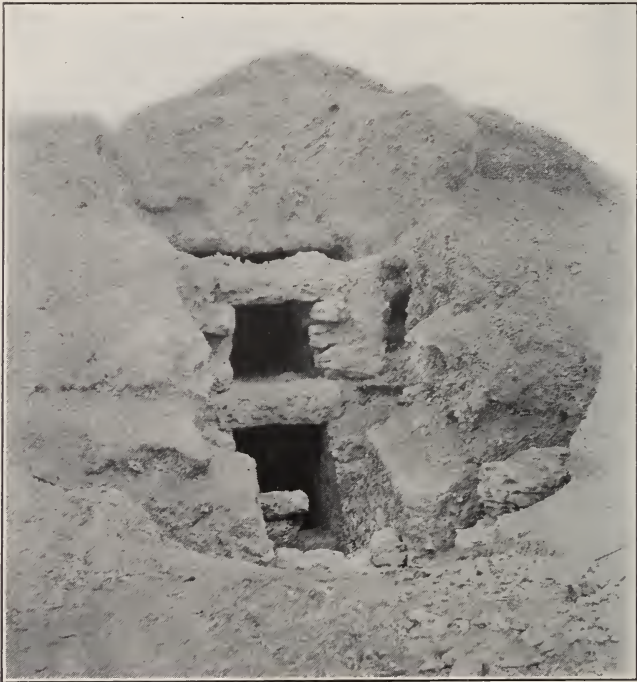


MOUNDS AT BAHREIN.

The more prominent mounds are from thirty to fifty feet high, and from two hundred to three hundred feet in circumference at the bottom. About eighty feet from the foot of the mound is a raised embankment encircling the whole, evidently marking off the enclosed space as sacred or forbidden. The material of which the mounds are made is sand mixed with crushed stone. In the midst of this mass of

sand and rubble is always found a compartment of smaller or larger size, built up of the soft limestone found in the vicinity. The size of these structures varies, but the plan is always the same; a narrow passage, with niches on both sides at either end. As a rule there is but a single passage, but in a few cases it is two stories high, with additional niches near the center.

The mound opened at this time is one of the larger ones, with a single-story structure at its center. The door of this inner building usually faces the setting of the sun, so a hole had been dug down to where the door was supposed to be. It may be of interest to note that the excavations were conducted on the convict system, as all the swarthy laborers were temporary lodgers at the British penitentiary, one of them a former butler at the Mission House.



A MOUND OPENED.

But we must hasten to get the mound opened before sunset. The entrance to this mysterious little house under the big mound had been roughly plastered up. The obstruction was very carefully removed, that no particles might drop in and disturb the contents or the inmates. First of all, the temperature was taken, which was found to be like

that of the air outside. Then a light was introduced, followed by a pair of human eyes, which were to look upon something that no mortal eye had seen since ages and ages ago. The very thought of this, coupled with the uncertainty as to what might be revealed, made us all stand by in awe and silence. And what was brought to light! The bones of a dead man. The passage was about fourteen feet long and four feet wide, with the usual niches on both sides at either end. In the two niches near the entrance were found the bones of the deceased, together with a jug containing his last, uneaten morsel. There was no name, no date, no inscription, and the manner of his death will ever remain a mystery. In one niche lay his skull and several bones of an arm and a leg, while the remainder were in the opposite niche about eight or nine feet away. How these members became so far separated in the case of a man of ordinary size cannot be explained.

But as the manner of his death is an unsolved problem, how much more the mode of his life. That night as I lay stretched out on the desert, endeavoring to sleep in sight of the full-orbed moon, the thought of these thousands upon thousands of lives forced itself upon me. Up they came, from the gardens, from the desert, and from over the surging sea. They lived their short life here or elsewhere, and then fell in line

"To join

The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death."

And from that unknown day when this poor individual was entombed in his last, long home even until now, that caravan has kept moving, yea, ever and anon, a new form emerges from the gardens and another head appears over the brow of yonder hill. Shall all these go "like the quarry slave at night, scourged to their dungeon," forevermore to be holden by the power of death? Better than letting the light into their grave is it to let the light into their soul and heart and life. And the burden of my prayer has increasingly become that I may ever more faithfully be a messenger of light, to lead these incarcerated and benighted souls to the grace that saves, in order that they may now live to the glory of God's name, and at last may enter the heavenly mansions to the welcome sound of "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Wards of Busrah Hospital.

DR. ARTHUR K. BENNETT.

All our in-patients are in six rooms of different sizes. In the largest we have six beds and in the smallest three. At the present time nearly every bed is occupied and the cases are particularly interesting both from a medical and spiritual standpoint.

The first room to the right after coming upstairs has four beds and four patients. The first patient's name is Gabbar. He comes from Hawaza, a town about forty miles away, near the Persian border. He is a middle aged man with a grizzled beard, who has been operated upon successfully for hernia. He insists upon kissing my hands whenever I visit him, wishing to show me the same fidelity which he has for his sheikh. He is so ignorant that not much of the Gospel story is understood, but he understands and appreciates the kindness shown him.

The next man, Mohammed, is also from Hawaza. He is a younger man, with much more intelligence, and has borne with patience and fortitude the long weeks of suffering following an operation for vesicle calculus. We know that when he goes he will carry away with him a good impression of us and our ways, and also a knowledge of what our Gospel means to us.

In the third bed is a cataract case. When he came an old one-eyed man was leading him, but if the operation is a success he will walk away seeing. Oh, that we could open their moral vision as quickly! He comes from a place called Yahvodie, ten or twelve miles out of Busrah.

The last man here is a glaucoma case. The eye was operated upon some time ago and seems to be doing well. He is loud in his praises to us, and calls upon Allah and Isa (Jesus) to bless us all.

In the next room are three very interesting cases. The first is a young Bedouin, Araby by name, only about nineteen years of age, but I suppose he has been in a good many fights, and in the last one a bullet wounded him in his hip. It is sad to think that even far into the desert and probably into its farthest recesses the modern rifle has penetrated, but the Gospel story still waits to be told to thousands of Arab camps.

The next patient has hydatid cysts of the liver. We are to operate soon, and although we know how difficult it will be, yet we are praying for strength to do everything all right. The tumor is very large and we shall probably find hundreds of little cysts as we did in a previous case. He has traveled a long distance to reach us, coming from Samowa, nearly two hundred and fifty miles away on the Euphrates.

Next to him and the last man in this room is a case of gun-shot

wound of the chest. He also came from the Euphrates country, and has been through a long siege of sickness. We are doubtful if we will be able to bring him around. When a portion of a rib was removed we found that five long pieces of cloth had been passed into the wound and had lodged in the chest cavity. These people have very little idea as to how a wound should be treated and we find many strange methods of treatment.

The third room has been given up to a Sayeed, a man of family and a relative of the Nahsib of Busrah. He has broken his thigh, and as it refused to heal they brought him to us when we performed an operation with every hope of success. He listens to the Gospel each day, and although supposed to be one of the direct descendants of Mohammed accepts our teaching with good grace.



A BULLET WOUND.

In the next room is a woman named Sherifa, in whom we are all very much interested. She came down from Nasariyeh, about one hundred and fifty miles, with only her 14-year-old boy to look after her. She had a large abscess in the abdomen. We operated, and she is now healing so rapidly that we hope to send her away in a week. We were a strange sort of people to her, but she appreciates our kindness, and I am sure will bear away to others good reports of our hospital. Her boy Mohammed is a sturdy, manly little fellow whom we hope to have some day in our school.

In Sherifa's room is a little boy who fell and cut himself on a piece of iron. It was a severe cut, and we have had to chloroform him to sew up a fistula which formed. We could almost start a school from the number of boys we have had with us this year. Probably when the school gets larger many of these boys who were touched here at the hospital will attend.

For our fourth room we have converted an old passageway into a sort of room, into which we crowd three beds. One patient here is a Bedouin with a bullet wound in his hip, another one is a Sayeed with a deep thigh abscess. With both these men Salomie, our colporter, has many discussions on the Gospel, and it is from such men that we can expect fruit. The last case here is a small boy from whom we have removed a bad tumor of the eye.

Our last room, which we use for the dirtiest cases, was made by partitioning off part of the inner porch. We can accommodate six patients here, but at the present time we have a vesicle calculus and fistula case, a man with a broken thigh, a case of pressure on the brain, and last of all, a little Persian girl covered from head to foot with great sores.

This is the present situation of the hospital, and it would be impossible for me to keep so many if it were not for Mrs. Vogel, who dresses the majority of them. In the morning my time is occupied with dispensary patients four days a week, and operations on two other days. During the afternoon I generally have to go to Busrah or Ashar to visit out-cases, and there are sometimes as many as six or eight of them.

All these patients have the Gospel preached to them daily. My colporter Salomie is a very consecrated man and very sympathetic and tactful; with many men he opens discussion about the Gospels, the Koran and Mohammed. He seems never to be at a loss in refuting their arguments skillfully. We all talk to the patients as we move among them to treat them, but those who are most interested in the Gospel Salomie tells me about, and I try to help them farther on.

The great majority of these patients are treated free, although we have at present several who pay something for operations and treatments. Some of the free patients have to be kept months at a time, and one can realize how many bandages and dressings we are obliged to use. The good supply of things from the Summer Sewing Guild helped us greatly during the past year.

I have told you about the patients we have allowed to come into the hospital. But I would like to say a word about those unfortunates whom we are unable to receive, not because of lack of room, but because they are afflicted with that disease which, when once it gets a foothold never lets go until the soul parts from the body. Since the beginning

of the year we have treated over a hundred lepers, and many of them were not aware what their disease was until I told them. Some had wives and children who were just becoming tainted with the disease. There seems to be no attention paid to them by the Government. Since there is no isolation, their constant intermingling with the people is a source of danger to all. Few recognize the disease until it has made the person so objectionable that they are bound to be afraid because of its very unsightliness.

As yet nothing has been attempted for the lepers here, so we must await patiently the dawning of the day when these people will receive proper medical care and spiritual help. Sure, leprosy is here, but how much worse is the sin soul-sickness which we see on every hand. This is too difficult to describe. Oh! to be able to touch with the divine touch, and heal not only the body but the soul, and restore this people to the Lord and bring the descendants of Ishmael to the feet of the true Messiah. May God speed the day when the spirit of the Lord will go up and down this land searching the spirits of the men of the desert so that the Arab too may touch the hem of the Master's garment and be healed.

Educational Work, Bahrein, 1908.

The report of last year closed with the statement that "the school seems to be progressing, with a bright year before it." The report of this year may open with the words that the school is still progressing and has a bright year to look back upon. For the first three months of the year the school was entirely in the hands of two native teachers, with very little supervision, and no instruction on the part of the missionary. For the following three months Mr. Barny gave part of every forenoon to classes studying English. These six months of work very properly ended in a public examination of the scholars before the missionaries of the station, followed on July 18th by a public entertainment which was attended by some of the more influential Arabs of Menamah, as well as by the official representative of the Sheikh of all Bahrein.

Two weeks after this entertainment a summer school was opened for all those who wished to study the English language. Owing to the great heat, the sessions were confined to the morning hours. This summer school was a new departure, but it has already proved its desirability. It kept the children in the habit of coming to school, and it kept the parents from thinking about another place to which to send their children. Further, it afforded those who come from other places to spend their summer here an opportunity of attending the school and getting a desire for an education. Thus it happened that during

the summer five young men, four of whom are of the royal family of Moharrek, began to attend the school for instruction in English. Three of these still continue to come, and are very promising students. The other two would also come if distance and circumstances did not prevent them.

On September 21st the regular fall term opened with the full number of scholars. As usual, the morning is devoted to lessons in English, and the afternoon to study in the Arabic language. All the common branches are taught, including physiology and geography. The morning session opens with Scripture reading and prayer, and the afternoon session closes with prayer. One attempt was made to keep the Moslem children from attending the opening exercises, but a little firmness sufficed to frustrate the attempt.



MISSION HOUSE.

CHAPEL, SCHOOL, HOSPITAL.

MISSION BUILDINGS AT BAHREIN.

In July the regular school teacher left. Since then most of the teaching had to be done by men who knew little about teaching Arabic and less about teaching English, as they know but little English and know that little badly. The missionary in charge took the more important classes in English, giving from one to three hours a day to this work. But little or nothing could be done about visiting the homes of the pupils, and no attempt at all was made to encourage others to attend the school. All the time and energy was taken up by endeavoring to satisfy those who came. Hence there is no reason why, with the blessing of God on a good teaching force and an earnest endeavor, the attendance upon the school should not be doubled or trebled.

As to the more important needs of the school in the immediate future, it is safe to say that a capable teacher filled with the spirit of

Christ is the prime requisite. Then the curriculum must be enlarged, and the work brought more up to date and made more thorough. Appliances to help in the study of geography and the simpler elements of physics are also greatly needed. Nowhere is object teaching more necessary and essential than among such pupils as come to the Bahrein school. The matter of religious instruction should also be a subject



BAHREIN BOYS' SCHOOLROOM.

of early consideration and of constant prayer, that it may be begun in the right way at the right time. The school is still progressing and the outlook is still bright. Those who desire a fit subject for praise and for prayer will do well to study the following tabulated statement of attendance:

	Mos-	Chris-	
	lems.	tians.	Jews.
Total enrollment, December 1, 1907.....	17	8	
Total enrollment, December 1, 1908.....	12	6	3
Admitted during the year.....	6		3
Dismissed during the year.....	11	3	
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total attendance for the year.....	2,656	628	117
Average attendance for the year....	11.4	2.69	0.5
Total school days for the year, 233.			

The Pearl and the Diver.

Few of those who adorn themselves with pearls have any idea of the hardships and sufferings that have brought these pearls into their possession. Not only does every pearl cost the life of a hundred animals, but the risking of a human life, and without doubt its disablement. But it is not necessary to repeat what has so often been told; how the diver places a pair of pinchers on his nose, and weights on his feet, plunges down into the depths, to be brought to the surface a few minutes later, a limp and almost lifeless body. Many are they who leave Bahrein for the pearling banks, never to return, or to return crippled for life. But what excites our pity even more is that those who risk their lives so constantly, are not rewarded for their toil, and from one diving season to the other they live in need of the bare necessities of life. How well the pearl merchant has the poor diver in his grasp can best be seen from the following

CONTRACT OF A DIVER WITH HIS EMPLOYER.

It is necessary to state that I, Sebt bin Ali Abu Gheith, have agreed with Othman Mohammed bin Ramel on the necessary conditions as given below, and these are as follows:

First—That I am bound to dive for Othman upon my arrival at Ceylon, whenever the diving begins, with his boats and at his command, and not to make any expenses except at his command.

Second—That he receives a third of all I gain through diving, and this statement has my firm support, without aversion or feeling of compulsion.

Third—That whatever expenses I have from the time of my leaving the wharf of Bahrein till my arriving at the place of diving, i. e., Ceylon, will be deducted from my earnings after Othman's third has been deducted according to the stipulations.

Fourth—That the expenses shall not be taken from the original earnings, but only after Othman's third has been deducted.

Fifth—That, after we have arrived at Ceylon and acquired a boat, I am bound to take ship at the beginning of the diving season, and I must work with diligence and to the utmost of my ability.

Sixth—That I have no right to take ship with another, or to enter into an agreement with another, nor to take ship in any boat other than the one Othman shall assign.

Seventh—After diving has begun I am bound to dive, nor may I desist to dive, except for a valid reason, such as sickness or the like.

Eighth—That I may not leave the place of diving except after orders from Othman, or after I have received permission from him to go to Ali or some other place.

Ninth—That all my earnings from first to last remain in the hands of Othman as it comes in day by day, and that the same remains with him unmolested till the end of the diving season.

Tenth—That, if we reach the place of diving, and no diving is done, and we return and arrive at Bahrein, I return to Othman above mentioned all that he has expended for me.

Eleventh—That, if I do not deliver to Othman immediately upon my arrival in Bahrein all that he has spent on me, he may put me aboard with any captain he wishes, for diving upon the high seas, and take his dues from him.

Twelfth—That, if we arrive at the place of diving and anything is done by me at variance with these conditions written above, I am subject to the punishment demanded by the truth.

Thirteenth—That I assure Othman that I am a diver acquainted with the various kinds of diving, and if I turn out different in any way, he gets the full half of my earnings. Verily, I, Sebt bin Ali Abu Gheith, of Kuweit, living at Kebla belonging to Kuweit, I, who place my signature and my seal below, have made an agreement with Othman Mohammed bin Ramel to embark for the diving at Ceylon and he turns in to me all my expenses beforehand. As stated above, he deducts it from my earnings after the deduction of the third, for he gets a third of the earnings, and takes it from what remains, according to the stipulations above. I am bound to the above mentioned to abide by what is written above, and that without any cessation or opposition or deceit, and if I do not live up to the above stipulations, I am liable to the punishment of deductions as stated above, and I am open to full and just punishment at the hands of whatever government to which he may accuse me. And I have given permission to one to witness to this agreement and to one to approve the writing as true, of whatever government he may be. And God is a witness of all we say, and he is a sufficient and a merciful witness, and pray for Mohammed.

Witnessed after reading.

MOHAMMED BIN MUBAREK EL MURSA'AD.

Witness of the writer.

ABDUL AZIZ ERRASHID ESSA'ID.

Signed and sealed.

SEBT BIN ALI ABU GHEITH.

It is needless to say that the "punishment demanded by the truth" is usually called for and is meted out with severity, and by men who themselves have not the faintest idea of truth. The result is that the poor diver is usually cheated out of most, if not all, of his hard earned money, and is almost penniless till at the next diving season another advance is made to him under equally exacting conditions.

Memorial on Reinforcements.

The Board of Trustees of the Arabian Mission through the Board of Foreign Missions has made known to the church the "larger vision" with reference to "new responsibilities now opening in the Eastern world" and has submitted estimates for a proposed policy to be carried out during the coming years if the Church will assume its share in meeting these responsibilities. The Synod of the past year recommended the endorsement of this policy and passed a resolution "that the results of the inquiry instituted by a Committee of the Conference of Officers of the Foreign Mission Boards of the United States as to the forces and funds needed for the speedy evangelization of our Mission Fields" be adopted as the working basis for the forward movement of the churches.

The Arabian Mission rejoices to know that the Church at home is so heartily supporting the policy adopted, and we take courage and believe that our requests and hopes for larger support and more workers will now speedily be realized. The "larger vision" of this Mission has always been the evangelization of Arabia, with the aim to occupy the interior of Arabia from the coast as a base.

In order to accomplish this aim our efforts have been and must still be to become firmly established on the coast. This work has grown steadily during the past years, but at the present needs more attention than ever, if we shall hold what we have gained and embrace the opportunities now before us.

The work in the several stations has grown to such an extent that the missionaries find it most difficult to break away for necessary visits to outstations and touring in surrounding districts. The educational work needs the attention of special workers who shall devote all their time to this alone. The medical work in the stations has grown so large that it is not practicable for the physicians to leave the hospitals unattended while away on tours. But our work in the out-districts cannot be neglected. All the work of past years has opened new opportunities for outstations and the people are asking for doctors and teachers.

This year the Mission has assigned a physician to the Oman field to begin the medical work there which had been planned for years past. The Oman coast, called "The Pirate Coast," has for several years asked for a doctor, and the outstations in the Busrah field ought to have a physician.

Missionaries for evangelistic work are very much needed, for already, by reason of necessary furloughs, we have been obliged to take a man from outstation work to assign him to other station work.

Medical work for women has long asked for lady physicians. At present educational work for girls is waiting for special workers. The Mission on the field is ready to provide accommodations for new workers as soon as they are sent, for houses can be rented in almost all of our stations until such a time as permission is given to build. At Busrah we have land which is the property of the Mission and we can build immediately if the Trustees agree.

At Bahrein we have asked to build for Arab work, which building will house a missionary, and thus afford more room in the present Mission house. We can buy property immediately at Nasariyeh and Amara at very reasonable prices. Teachers to teach new missionaries the language are already at hand. And workers to assist them as soon as they are ready to take charge of work will, we trust, be available. Four new helpers have just joined the mission.

Eager to begin this Forward Movement on the field, to perfect the work now in hand, and to take up the work now waiting for our immediate attention, we beg to submit to the Board of Trustees a request for missionaries needed in the immediate future and trust that they will give ear to our request and send us these reinforcements at the earliest possible opportunity.

Our needs for the immediate future are:

1. Three clergymen for outstations and touring.
2. Four male physicians for outstations and touring.
3. One lady physician.
4. One trained nurse.
5. One man for educational work.
6. One single lady with kindergarten training.

NOTE.—Of these, one clergyman, one male and one lady physician have already been appointed.

The Arabian Mission Trustees' Meeting.

The Trustees of the Arabian Mission met on March 24, 1909, in regular session in the rooms of the Board of Foreign Missions. Beside the Trustees, Drs. Cantine, Zwemer and Worrall were present.

Satisfactory medical certificates having been received in regard to Dr. and Mrs. Cantine, the Board gave its approval to their return to Arabia next fall.

Dr. Zwemer gave notice that it had been concluded to delay the proposed tour of exploration to Moslem lands till a later date.

In view of correspondence with the Secretary of the Reformed Church in the United States (German) with reference to the occupation of a field in or section of Arabia, the Board extended a very cordial

welcome to that Church to co-operate in missionary work in Arabia, or Persia, if the way is clear for it to undertake such work.

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Arabian Mission held in January, 1909, were presented and the following assignments of missionaries were reported:

Busrah—Mr. Van Ess, Dr. Bennett, Mr. Pennings and Mrs. Vogel.

Bahrein—Mr. Moerdyk, Dr. and Mrs. Mylrea, Miss Wilterdink and Dr. Josselyn.

Muscat—Mr. Dykstra and Dr. and Mrs. Thoms. Dr. Thoms to open medical work in Muttra near Muscat at once, and to establish himself there so soon as possible.

Of the numerous items transacted the following will be of general interest:

1. The proposal to locate the new hospital at Busrah on conditions stated by the Board, and the appointment of a committee to draw up plans and secure a permit before June 1, if possible.

2. In view of the assignment of Dr. Thoms to medical work in Oman, \$1,533 were appropriated by request of the Mission, or so much of that amount as may be required, to meet the necessary expense incident to the establishment of such work.

3. The sum of \$2,000 was appropriated for the erection of a building at Bahrein to be placed in the northeast corner of the hospital compound, to be used for a house for work for Arab men and to provide accommodations for single missionaries.

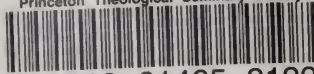
4. The Mission was authorized to expend from medical receipts at Busrah in 1908 and 1909, Rs. 985 for the purchase of a launch to be used in touring by the members of the station, and Rs. 800 for its maintenance during the year.

5. The request for \$800 gold to erect a woman's dispensary in Muscat, of which \$500 have already been contributed, was granted, and it was voted to invite the Woman's Board to co-operate in completing the amount needed.

6. A Memorial on reinforcements adopted by the Mission was presented asking, in view of the needs of the immediate future, for the appointment of two additional clergymen for outstations and touring, three additional male physicians for outstations and touring, one trained nurse, one man for educational work, one single lady with kindergarten training. The Secretaries were authorized to endeavor to secure men and women for these positions.

7. The Manual adopted by the Board of Foreign Missions, December 10, 1908, was approved and adopted as the Manual of the Arabian Mission.

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